1: Metraux E-5 (1934-1935) 1940
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372 the island. Sheep dung was also used. In ancient times, when the population was far more dense, the fuel problem must have been serious. Yet the natives did not seem to worry about it. Cook (53, vol. 1, p. 292) saw twelve fires burning at the same place morning and evening. Natives burned the straps or tops of sugar cane, plantain heads, and probably branches from the numerous shrubs scattered about the island.

OVEN

●354 Before the introduction of European cooking utensils, natives cooked (*ootu*) all their food in underground ovens (*umu*), similar to those in other parts of Polynesia. Wherever remains of settlements are found there are ancient ovens also.

The ovens are pentagonal in shape, formed of five slabs, generally curbs taken from some house. The slabs are buried in the ground to varying depths and project only 10 or 15 cm. above the surface enclosing a space 2 feet in diameter. My principal informant [801] called my attention to the fact that the stones of the ovens always numbered five or seven and that an odd number of stones was imposed by superstition. I noticed only one oven with six slabs on the island. A screen or covered roof protected the oven from the wind (130, vol. 2, p. 256). This type of oven is no longer used.

Modern natives make earth ovens only when they are in camp or preparing a banquet.

354 A hole about 2 feet deep is dug, on the bottom of which are placed large stones
252 covered with grass. On this first layer, stones the size of the fist are piled up in a heap with small branches, scraps of wood (*hukahuka*) and grass. Fire is set to the pile (*ka te umu* or *puhi te umu*). The glowing stones are evenly fitted (*uru*) and spread with two sticks handled like tongs. The food—meat, sweet potatoes, yams, taro—is placed (*tao*) in the oven on banana or ti leaves to prevent burning. More hot stones are spread against or above (*puapua*) the leaves protecting the food. Formerly bundles were covered (*pengopengo*) with grass (*tauetu*), today with a sack. Soil is shoveled (*tanu kai oone*) over the pit. After 2 hours the food is generally considered sufficiently cooked and is removed (*maoa*). To cook food well is *kukokope o te umu*. The entrails of the animals are roasted (*katui*) on the glowing stones of the *umu*.

PREPARATION OF FOOD

252 Cooked food is never pounded on Easter Island, and probably never was in the past, since no food pounders have ever been found there. Breadfruit and taro are the staples in other parts of Polynesia and are mashed. Breadfruit does not grow on Easter Island and taro is far less important in diet than sweet potatoes which are never pounded. Pounding food requires a great deal of water and water has always been scarce on Easter Island.

231 Formerly the natives were reluctant to shed the blood of any animal. This may have had a religious background but it is more probable that the natives simply did not want to waste any blood. Chickens were strangled by
252 twisting the neck; larger animals, such as goats and dogs, were suffocated by burying the head in a hole or in smoke. The hair was then singed and, with-

12: Routledge E-5 (1914-1915) 1920
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Form of Structure.—The shape of the house, when the roof is added, noticeably resembles that of an inverted Canadian canoe, *i.e.*, both ends are alike, and as it diminishes in breadth, so does it diminish in height. 172* 342

Earth Covering.—When the house is completed soil is placed over it; the depth of the roof may amount to about 2 feet. The anterior wall alone is left bare. Otherwise the house is so covered with earth as to blend with the surrounding surface (Plate VIII, Fig. 1).

Decoration.—The interior is often decorated by means of a white pigment, with which the walls and roof are covered, giving the effect of whitewash. The largest slabs—*i.e.*, those opposite the doorway, where they obtain most light—are frequently also adorned with designs in colour (Plate IV, Fig. 2). [353]

Exterior Cavity for Stores.—Outside the house a small pit is not unusually found, a few feet from the door and in line with it. These pits are lined, and in the best specimen, also floored and roofed, with slabs. Nodules of volcanic ash were frequently found in them, which are said to have been used for heating purposes, and the pits were at first reported to have been used for cooking purposes. Later it was stated that they were intended to contain stores, and as practically no charred ash was found, this latter statement is probably correct (Plate VII, Figs. 1, 3). These pits are shown in the plan where discovered, but many are probably buried or destroyed.[1] 172* 251

Kitchens.—The site of the cooking places was pointed out nearer the cliff edge. They were, it was said, simply cavities dug in the earth and not lined with masonry. 172* 354

THE HOUSES IN NUMERICAL SEQUENCE.

Nos. 1 and 2 are covered by the same mound of earth. Their orientation is unique, as they stand at right angles to the crater, and also at right angles to the main row of buildings. 172*

No. 1.

Condition: one-third of house at the north-west end broken down. Roof and part of wall absent. Panels[2] largely broken away.

Passage:—6′ 8″, outer end indeterminate, inner end 1′ 6″ × 2′ 1″; roof of flat slabs; has apparently never had panels.

Chamber:—23′ 0″ × 4′ 4″ × 4′ 3″. East end square, made from slab 3′ 6″ wide; west end rounded.

Decoration:—exterior, a large sculptured stone, contiguous to outer door but partially buried, was laid bare. It bore one small bird-man[3] figure and a larger design obliterated by weathering.

[1] The "drain for the dead," mentioned by Surgeon Palmer (*Ethnological Review*, Vol. I, p. 271), was carefully sought and excavated for, but could not be recognised.

[2] In the following description, for the sake of simplicity the lamina will be termed "panels" where employed vertically, and "slabs" when used horizontally.

[3] See below, "Carvings according to Type," *Bird-man*.

15:Routledge E-5 (1914-1915) 1919
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342 and it is very rare to find them still in place, as they were comparatively light, weighing from one to two hundredweight, and easily carried off. Even the heavier stones were at times seized [727] upon as booty in enemy raids; one measuring 15 feet was pointed out to us near an ahu on the south coast, which had been brought all the way from the north side of the island. In the middle of one side of the house was a doorway, and in the front of it a porch, which had also stone foundations. The whole space in front of the house was neatly paved with water-worn boulders, in the same manner as the ahu. This served as a stoep on which to sit and talk, but its practical utility was obvious to ourselves in the rainy seasons, when the entrance to our tents and houses became deep in mud (fig. 84A). Near the main abode was a thatched house which contained the native oven, the stones of which are often still in place. The cooking was done Polynesian [252] fashion: a hole about 15 inches deep is lined with flat stones, a 354 fire is made within, and, when the stones are sufficiently heated, the food, wrapped up in parcels, is stacked within and covered with earth, a fire being lighted on the top.

Many of the surviving old people were born and brought up in these houses, which are known as "haré paenga." The old man, for example, before alluded to, who was brought out to Raraku, roved round the mountain telling with excitement who occupied the different houses in the days of his youth. He gave a particularly graphic description of the scene after sundown, when all were gathered within for the evening meal. In addition to the main door, there was, he said, an opening near each end by which the food was passed in and then from hand to hand; as perfect darkness reigned, a sharp watch had to be kept that it all reached its proper owners. He lay down within the old foundations to show how the inhabitants [513] slept. This was parallel to the long axis of the house, the head being towards the door; the old people were in the centre in couples, and the younger ones in the ends. The largest of these houses, which had some unique features, measured 122 feet in length, with an extreme width of 12 feet; but some 50 feet [512] by 5 feet or 6 feet are more usual measurements. They were often shared by related families and held anything from ten to thirty, or even more, persons.

600 The food consisted of the usual tropical produce, such as